

# News from Ed Markey

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## CONGRESS PASSES SUPPLEMENTAL BILL WHICH PREVENTS USE OF FUNDS FOR TORTURE

**WASHINGTON, DC-** One day after a military judge tossed out the plea agreement of Abu Ghraib prison guard Pfc. Lynndie England who was accused of torturing prisoners, Congress sent a critical message to the country about the US's commitment to ending torture by passing the supplemental bill which included language similar to that offered by Representative Ed Markey (D-MA) when the House approved the bill last month, which would prohibit the use any funds included in the bill to be used to the contravention of legal obligations under the Convention Against Torture.

"Torture of any kind is unacceptable. The U.S. cannot and must not engage in torture. This bill marks our commitment to upholding the Convention Against Torture, but it is only the beginning of what we must accomplish in order to end the practice of sending prisoners overseas to be tortured," said Rep. Markey.

Markey explained, "What we need to do to ensure the U.S. is fully in compliance with our legal and moral obligation not to send people to countries where they are likely to face torture is end the practice of using diplomatic assurances from known torturers as the basis for sending detainees to such countries. We cannot rely on assurances of countries like Syria and Uzbekistan that they won't torture a person, as these countries are known to already be lying about their use of torture in prisoner interrogations."

Representative Markey, the author of H. R. 952, the Torture Outsourcing Prevention Act –a bill that would end the current practice of rendering prisoners to countries that have been determined by the US state Department to be violators of the Convention Against Torture, has been an outspoken voice on ending the practice of torture. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Human Rights First all endorsed the measure to ban the use of federal funding for any programs which engage in torture.

H.R. 1268, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill, provides funding to continue the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and also contains numerous other supplemental appropriations for various government agencies. The bill also includes a controversial provision that would establish federal standards for driver's licenses issued by the states.

“We have a responsibility to end the practice of sending prisoners to other countries to be tortured. It is wrong to let other countries do our ‘dirty work.’ If we fight our enemy using the same inhumane and morally bankrupt techniques that we are trying to stop, we will simply become what we have beheld. The anti-torture language in the final bill begins to send the type of message we need to be sending to the world: the US does not and will not condone or accept torture,” said Rep. Markey.

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